

in them to countenance any suite of national ideas. You will judge, therefore, from this how impossible I think it that either your explanation or that of any man in "the Heavens above or on the earth beneath" can be a correct one. What has. no meaning admits no explanation! (To Gen. Alexander Smith, 1825. C VII., 395-)

APPROBATION.—In a virtuous and free State no rewards can be so pleasing to sensible minds, as those which include the approbation of our fellow-citizens. My great pain is, lest my poor endeavor should fall short of the kind expectations of my country. So far as impartiality, assiduous attention, and sincere affection to the great American cause, shall enable me to fulfill the duties of my appointment, so far I may with confidence undertake. (From a speech to the General Assembly, made upon assuming the duties of governor of Virginia, 1779. F. II., 187.)

ARISTOCRACY.—If anybody thinks that kings, nobles, or priests are good conservators of the public happiness send them here. It is the best school in the universe to cure them of their folly. They will see here with their own eyes that their descriptions of men are an abandoned confederacy against the happiness of the mass of people. The omnipotence of their effect cannot be better proved than in this country particularly, where notwithstanding the finest soil upon earth, the finest climate under heaven, and a people of the most benevolent, the most gay and amiable character of which the human form is susceptible, where such a people I say, surrounded by so many blessings from nature, are yet loaded with misery by kings, nobles and priests, and by them alone. (Written from Paris to George Wythe, 1786. F. IV., 269.)

ARISTOCRACY.—I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents. Formerly, bodily powers gave place among the *aristoi*. But since the invention of gunpowder has armed the weak as well as the strong with missile death, bodily strength, like beauty, good humor, politeness and other accomplishments, has become but an auxiliary ground of distinction. There is also